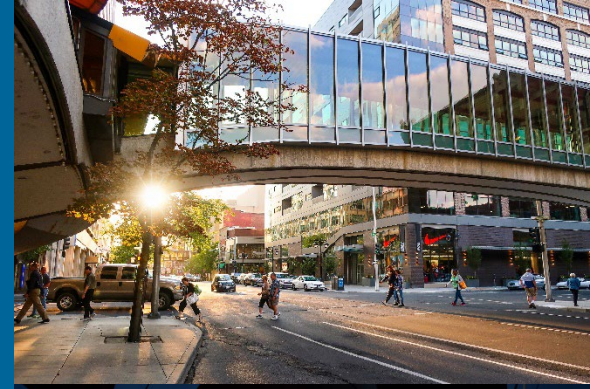




Presented to:
Transportation Commission
July 16, 2026

Joint Transportation Committee Alternative Local Funding Options for Sidewalk - Study Results

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Sidewalks 101 Briefing

“Property between the curb lines or the lateral lines of a roadway and the adjacent property, set aside and intended for the use of pedestrians or such portion of private property parallel and in proximity to a public highway and dedicated to use by pedestrians” (RCW 46.04.540)

- 24,200 miles of sidewalk in WA
 - 24% of surveyed cities and 78% of surveyed counties have major gaps in their sidewalk networks including priority areas
 - ~560 miles of missing sidewalks in Spokane
- Significant funding gaps for sidewalk construction and maintenance



Alternative Local Funding Options for Sidewalk Study

- Commissioned by the Joint Transportation Commission (JTC)
- Consider sidewalks and connected pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., signals, crosswalks)
 - Include both cities and counties
- Focus on mechanisms that generate funding for local jurisdictions
- Learn from what already works in WA and supplement with models from elsewhere
- Per the proviso, consider options that are not authorized under current statute



Alternative Funding Mechanisms Explored

Funding Mechanism	Description	Revenues Modeled
Sidewalk Utility	A fee based on a jurisdiction's planned annual sidewalk expenditures	Low (\$50) and high (\$200) flat fees per parcel—actual fee would need to vary by property
Modified TBD Sales Tax	An additional sales tax within a Transportation Benefit District	0.1% sales tax
New REET Option	An additional real estate excise tax (REET)	0.25% to 1% excise tax on each sale of real property
Modified Stormwater Utility Fee	Authorization for a jurisdiction to use stormwater fee revenues for construction and maintenance of ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps	Low (5%) and high (10%) increase over current stormwater fee



Alternative Funding Mechanisms Evaluated for

Adequacy – Extent to which the mechanism can generate sufficient revenue in to meet sidewalk maintenance and construction needs.

Stability – Reliability of the funding source over time, including its resilience to economic downturns.

Simplicity – Level of resources needed to implement the mechanism, including data and systems, communications, and resulting staffing needs.

Non-regressivity – Whether costs fall disproportionately on lower-resource groups, either directly (i.e., through charges or assessments) or indirectly (i.e., through rent increases or displacement).

Economic compatibility – Whether the mechanism may have downstream negative impacts on business activity, development, and the broader local economy.



Funding Mechanism Evaluation Summary

Evaluative Criteria	Sidewalk Utility	Modified TBD Sales Tax	New REET Option	Modified Stormwater Fee
Adequacy	Mid-high	Mid-high	Mid-high	Low
Stability	High	Mid	Low	High
Administrative Simplicity	Varies	High	High	High
Non-Regressivity	Mid	Low	High	Mid
Economic Compatibility	High	Mid	Mid	High
Potential Revenue for Spokane	\$4mil-\$16mil	\$7mil	\$4.2mil-\$16.8mil	\$325K-\$704K

Advantages and Disadvantages of Funding Mechanisms

Funding Mechanism	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sidewalk Utility	• Adequate, scalable revenue • Stable revenue • High economic compatibility	• Likely to be challenged in courts • Not administratively simple for some jurisdictions • Somewhat regressive
Modified TBD Sales Tax	• Adequate revenue • Simple administration	• Only moderately stable • Potential for negative economic impacts • Substantially regressive
New REET Option	• Adequate revenue • Simple administration • Not regressive	• Unstable revenue • Potential for negative economic impacts
Modified Stormwater Utility Fee	• Stable revenue • Simple administration • High economic compatibility	• Inadequate revenue • Somewhat regressive

JTC Recommendations

- Consider authorizing a modified TBD sales tax and a new REET option as low-risk options for local jurisdictions to fund pedestrian infrastructure
- Consider authorizing a sidewalk utility for local jurisdictions willing to assume the legal risk of implementation
- In any new funding mechanism, consider authorizing all types of pedestrian safety improvements including lighting, landscaping, ADA improvements
- Do not revise current statutory language related to the definition of the stormwater system as it relates to sidewalks



Next Steps

Staff will engage with city council on legislative priorities for the next legislative session and continue tracking legislative opportunities that may arise from study.



Questions?

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